Bongaigaon Thermal Power Station

3150. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the NTPC has totally disagreed to take over the Bongaigaon Thermal Power Station (BTPS), Assam and no policy to revive the same is undertaken by Government;

(b) whether it is also a fact that no such policy was finalized to install new power project at the same place during the recent meeting of Chief Minister of Assam and Prime Minister as appeared in the print media; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has carried out a study for Renovation and Modernization (R&M) of Bongaigaon Thermal Power Station (BTPS) and found that though it is technically feasible to renovate the existing units of BTPS and found that though it is technically feasible to renovate the existing units of BTS, it would not be economically viable as the tariff works out to about Rs. 3.16 per unit after carrying out R&M at the estimated cost of Rs. 700 crores. Hence, capital grant/viability gap funding of Rs. 350 crores would have to be provided to bring down the tariff to an acceptable level of Rs. 2.50 per unit. Therefore, it was felt that it would be uneconomical to revive the existing power plant.

(b) and (c) the proposal for installation of a new power project at the same place was discussed at the appropriate level of Government of India and it was decided that NTPC would set up a new 500 MW (2x250 MW) thermal power station at Bongaigaon, Assam at the existing location of Bongaigaon TPS. The power plant will be based on Flue Gas Desulphurisation (FGD) technology to enable it to use Assam coal.

Complex problems in Power Sector

3151. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Power Sector continues to suffer from complex problems;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) Power shortages, weak financial position of the utilities due to high Aggregate Technical & Commercial (AT&C) losses, distortion in the tariff structure, overstaffing in utilities, poor metering, billing and collection efficiencies are major problems which power sector is facing.

(c) The Government has launched following major initiatives to overcome the problems of the power sector:

(i) Accelerating capacity addition to eliminate shortages.

(ii) Completing electrification of rural areas through the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana.

(iii) Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programmes (APDRP) for assisting States in investment in distribution network for reducing technical losses and improving the quality of supply and also for incentivising reduction of cash losses through cash grants.

(iv) Emphasis on metering of feeders and supply to consumers for energy accounting and auditing for identifying location of high losses; Stringent legal provisions relating to theft of electricity.

(v) Implementation of energy conservation measures. Bureau of Energy Efficiency has been set up under the Energy Conservation Act.

(vi) Partnership for excellence programme for improving operation and maintenance practices and renovation and modernization for improving Plant Load Factor (PLF) for poorly performing thermal power stations in the country.

Heavy fees charged by private distribution companies

3152. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private distribution companies in the Capital are charging very heavy fees for transfer of names consequent upon the change in transfer of properties;